IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 25-38 without prejudice to the prosecution thereof in a subsequently filed application.

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Cancelled)

27. (Cancelled)

28. (Cancelled)

29. (Cancelled)

30. (Cancelled)

31. (Cancelled)

32. (Cancelled)

33. (Cancelled)

34. (Cancelled)

35. (Cancelled)

36. (Cancelled)

37. (Cancelled)

38. (Cancelled)

43. (Currently Amended) A method for inhibiting IL-TIF-induced differentiation or proliferation of hematopoietic cells ~~and~~ or hematopoietic cell progenitors comprising culturing bone marrow or peripheral blood cells with a composition comprising an amount of soluble cytokine receptor comprising SEQ ID NO:3 sufficient to reduce proliferation of the hematopoietic cells in the bone marrow or peripheral blood cells as compared to bone marrow or peripheral blood cells cultured in the absence of the soluble cytokine receptor.

44. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 43, wherein the hematopoietic cells ~~and~~ or hematopoietic progenitor cells are lymphoid cells.

45. (Original Claim) The method of claim 44, wherein the lymphoid cells are macrophages or T cells.

46. (Currently Amended) A method of reducing ~~IL-TIF-induced or IL-9 induced~~ inflammation comprising administering to a mammal with inflammation an amount of a composition of soluble cytokine receptor comprising SEQ ID NO:3 sufficient to reduce inflammation.

47. (Currently Amended) A method of suppressing an immune response in a mammal exposed to an antigen or pathogen comprising:

(1) determining a level of an antigen- or pathogen-specific antibody;

(2) administering a composition comprising a soluble cytokine receptor polypeptide comprising SEQ ID NO:3 in an acceptable pharmaceutical vehicle;

(3) determining a post administration level of antigen- or pathogen-specific antibody;

(4) comparing the level of antibody in step (1) to the level of antibody in step (3), wherein a lack of increase or a decrease in antibody level is indicative of suppressing an immune response.

48. (Newly Added) The method of claim 43, wherein the soluble cytokine receptor further comprises a soluble CRF2-4 polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:33).

49. (Newly Added) The method of claim 46, wherein the soluble cytokine receptor further comprises a soluble CRF2-4 polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:33)

50. (Newly Added) The method of claim 47, wherein the soluble cytokine receptor further comprises a soluble CRF2-4 polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:33).

51. (Newly Added) A method of suppressing an inflammatory response in a mammal with inflammation comprising:

(1) determining a level of serum amyloid A protein;

(2) administering a composition comprising a soluble cytokine receptor polypeptide comprising SEQ ID NO:3 in an acceptable pharmaceutical vehicle;

(3) determining a post administration level of serum amyloid A protein;

(4) comparing the level of serum amyloid A protein in step (1) to the level of serum amyloid A protein in step (3), wherein a lack of increase or a decrease in serum amyloid A protein level is indicative of suppressing an inflammatory response.

52. (Newly Added) The method of claim 51, wherein the soluble cytokine receptor polypeptide further comprises an affinity tag, label, chemical moiety, toxin, biotin/avidin label, radionuclide, enzyme, substrate, cofactor, inhibitor, fluorescent marker, chemiluminescent marker, cytotoxic molecule or an immunoglobulin Fc domain.

53. (Newly Added) The method of claim 51, wherein the soluble cytokine receptor further comprises a soluble CRF2-4 polypeptide (SEQ ID NO:33).

54. (Newly Added) A method of treating a mammal afflicted with an inflammatory disease in which IL-TIF plays a role, comprising:

administering an antagonist of IL-TIF to the mammal such that the inflammation is reduced, wherein the antagonist comprises a polypeptide or cytokine-binding polypeptide fragment of SEQ ID NO:3; and

wherein the inflammatory activity of IL-TIF is reduced.

55. (Newly Added) The method of claim 54, wherein the disease is a chronic inflammatory disease.

56. (Newly Added) The method of claim 55, wherein the disease is a chronic inflammatory disease selected from the group consisting of:

(a) inflammatory bowel disease;

(b) colitis;

(c) Crohn's disease;

(d) arthritis;

(e) asthma; and

(f) psoriasis.

57. (Newly Added) The method of claim 54, wherein the disease is an acute inflammatory disease.

58. (Newly Added) The method of claim 57, wherein the disease is an acute inflammatory disease selected from the group consisting of:

(a) sepsis;

(b) allergy; and

(c) infectious disease.

59. (Newly Added) The method of claim 54, wherein the polypeptide or cytokine-binding polypeptide fragment further comprises an affinity tag, label, chemical moiety, toxin, biotin/avidin label, radionuclide, enzyme, substrate, cofactor, inhibitor, fluorescent marker, chemiluminescent marker, cytotoxic molecule or an immunoglobulin Fc domain.

60. (Newly Added) The method of claim 54, wherein the antagonist further comprises a polypeptide or cytokine-binding polypeptide fragment of soluble CRF2-4 (SEQ ID NO:33).

61. (Newly Added) An isolated soluble cytokine receptor polypeptide comprising a sequence of amino acid residues shown in SEQ ID NO:3, and

wherein the soluble cytokine receptor polypeptide binds IL-TIF or antagonizes IL-TIF activity.

62. (Newly Added) An isolated polypeptide according to claim 61, wherein the soluble cytokine receptor polypeptide forms a monomeric receptor or homodimeric receptor complex.

63. (Newly Added) An isolated polypeptide according to claim 61, wherein the soluble cytokine receptor polypeptide further comprises an affinity tag, label, chemical moiety, toxin, biotin/avidin label, radionuclide, enzyme, substrate, cofactor, inhibitor, fluorescent marker, chemiluminescent marker, cytotoxic molecule or an immunoglobulin Fc domain.

64. (Newly Added) An isolated soluble cytokine receptor polypeptide consisting of a sequence of amino acid residues shown in SEQ ID NO:3, and

wherein the soluble cytokine receptor polypeptide binds IL-TIF or antagonizes IL-TIF activity.

65. (Newly Added) An isolated polypeptide according to claim 64, wherein the soluble cytokine receptor polypeptide forms a monomeric receptor or homodimeric receptor complex.

66. (Newly Added) An isolated polypeptide according to claim 64, wherein the soluble cytokine receptor polypeptide further comprises an affinity tag, label, chemical moiety, toxin, biotin/avidin label, radionuclide, enzyme, substrate, cofactor, inhibitor, fluorescent marker, chemiluminescent marker, cytotoxic molecule or an immunoglobulin Fc domain.